

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the above application. By the above amendment, claims 11 and 12 have been added.

The Office Action dated August 10, 2007, has been received and carefully reviewed. Each issue raised in that Office Action is addressed below, and reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-12 is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Office Action objects to the listing of references in the background section of the application and indicates that the listed references have not been considered. It is respectfully submitted that each of the references mentioned in the background section of the application is listed on the form PTO-1449 filed with the IDS that accompanied the application. The examiner's initials appear next to these references on the copy of the PTO-1449 attached to the present Office Action. It is therefore believed that all references have been considered. If the language in the Office Action is intended to mean that the references on the PTO-1449 have not been considered, it is respectfully requested that the examiner provide a further explanation as to why these references have not been considered.

DRAWINGS

The drawings are objected to for failing to show "determination of whether the information from host terminal 2 arrived from the internet 4 or PSTN 3 as described in the specification." The Office Action indicates that all structural details necessary to an understanding of the invention must be illustrated in the drawings. It is noted that the limitation referred to above describes a method step and does not describe any structure that can be illustrated. However, to advance prosecution of this application, the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 17, has been amended. As amended, this paragraph describes a decision as to whether certain information has been received, not a determination as to whether it has been received from a particular source. The withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is therefore

respectfully requested.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

By the above amendment, the abstract has been revised to address the issues raised by the Office Action.

OBJECTIONS TO THE SPECIFICATION

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action, the examiner objects to page 5, lines 17-20 of the specification as being “incoherent.” It is respectfully submitted that the language objected to by the examiner mirrors certain language from claim 1. That portion of claim 1 is also objected to. The objection to claim 1 is addressed below, and Applicant respectfully submits that the language at page 5, lines 17-20 of the specification, is acceptable for the same reasons that the language of claim 1 is acceptable as argued below.

The objection to the specification raised in paragraph 5 of the Office Action is difficult to understand. The disclosure at page 20, lines 14-18 has been reviewed and is believed to clearly and accurately describe an aspect of the invention. This portion describes a resetting monitoring portion 11a that is part of the user terminal. This resetting monitoring portion performs at least two functions. The resetting monitoring portion monitors information that is sent from the host terminal (i.e. when that information is received at the user terminal). The resetting monitoring portion also gives the host terminal permission for connecting to a user when communication via the internet is impossible. The passage does not describe that the host terminal gives a permission as suggested in the Office Action. This objection to the specification is respectfully traversed.

The objection to page 21, line 23 of the specification has been addressed by removing the reference to PSTM 3.

The objection raised in paragraph 7 of the Office Action is respectfully traversed. One skilled in the art would understand that a modem can communicate with a network based on this description and the showings in, for example, Figures 1 and 2.

The objection to the specification at paragraph 9 of the Office Action is respectfully

traversed. The passage being objected to is grammatically correct and clearly describes a feature of the present invention. The modification proposed by the examiner may also be correct. However, there is no basis in the rules for requiring an Applicant to rewrite portions of the specification that are clear and correct. It is therefore submitted that this portion of the specification is proper.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claim 1 is objected to because of an “informality” that the causes the claim to lack clarity. It is respectfully submitted that this portion of claim 1 appears to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, because this language is not mentioned in the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. If the language is sufficiently clear to satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, it is respectfully submitted that no basis exists for finding the language objectionable based on clarity. The withdrawal of this objection is therefore respectfully requested.

While the claim objection is believed to be improper, in order to advance the prosecution of this application, Applicant has amended claim 1 to move one of the clauses therein in a manner which may make the meaning of the claim more clear. It is respectfully submitted that moving this clause does not change the scope of the claim. The withdrawal of the objection to claim 1 is respectfully requested for this reason as well.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite due to the reference to a “network interface for connecting...” The examiner argues that more than one network interface card would be required to connect multiple user terminals to a network. That might be correct; however, network interface cards are not being claimed. The claim language is not limited to a network interface card. As an example only, and without intending to limit the scope of claim 1, a network interface could potentially comprise a number of network interface cards or other arrangements for connecting the user terminals to the internet. Claim 1 is therefore submitted to comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The basis for this objection is unclear. Claim 2 recites a resetting monitoring means that is claimed as performing at least three functions: monitoring setting information, allowing [a first setting] and forbidding [a second setting]. If the examiner explains why these functions are believed to be contradictory or not possible, Applicant will attempt to address any such further objection. However, claim 2 is believed to clearly and accurately define a feature of the present invention, and the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is respectfully traversed.

Claim 7 has been revised to address the indefiniteness issue identified in the Office Action.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yoshimura in view of Kim and Dove. Claim 1 recites a remote maintenance system that includes, inter alia, a plurality of user terminals that are connected to at least a plurality of transmission lines, a host terminal connected to the plurality of transmission lines, and a user-side local area network connected to a specified transmission line. Claim 1 recites a system configured such that certain actions occur when the “user terminal ... sends a connection completion signal that represents the completion of connection between the user side local area network and the network interface.” Claim 1 further recites that a user terminal sends a specified contract signal and a connection completion signal to the host terminal via a first transmission line and that the host terminal selects a second transmission line and sends setting information for enabling communication to the user via the first transmission line. It is respectfully submitted that at least the above limitation is not shown or suggested by Yoshimura. The Office Action interprets sending apparatus 1 of Yoshimura as corresponding to the claimed “host apparatus” and the receiving apparatus as corresponding to the claimed “user terminal.” However, the Office Action then indicates, in paragraph 18, that the receiving apparatus (rather than the host apparatus) selects a second transmission path. This is contrary to the recitation of claim 1 in which the host terminal must send information to the user terminal. The Office Action relies upon Yoshimura to establish this limitation, and Kim and Dove in no manner show or suggest this claimed aspect of

the invention. Claim 1 is submitted to be allowable over the art of record for at least this reason.

Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and are submitted to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New claim 11 is also submitted to be allowable over the art of record. Claim 11 recites a remote maintenance system that includes, inter alia, a plurality of user terminals that are connected to first and second transmission lines of different communication methods and a host terminal that is connected to the first and second transmission lines. Claim 11 further recites that when a first one of the plurality of user terminals connects to a user-side local area network, the first one of the plurality of user terminals sends a user-side network connection completion signal to the host terminal via the first transmission line and also sends a specified contract signal to the host terminal via the first transmission line. The sending of such connection signals is not shown or suggested by the art of record. Claim 11 further recites that the host terminal sends to the first one of the user terminals setting information. Yoshimura in no manner shows or suggests this limitation. Instead, Yoshimura's receiving apparatus selects a secondary transmission path and sends information regarding this path to the sending apparatus. Kim and Dove do not address this shortcoming of Yoshimura. Claim 11 is therefore submitted to be allowable over the art of record

Claim 12 is also submitted to be allowable. Claim 12 recites a method of performing remote maintenance that involves, inter alia, providing a plurality of user terminals that are connected to first and second transmission lines of different communication methods, providing a host terminal that is connected to the first and second transmission lines, providing a user-side local area network that is connected to the second transmission line, and providing at least one network interface for connecting the plurality of user terminals and the user-side local area network. The method further involves connecting a first one of the plurality of user terminals to the user-side local area network, sending from the first one of the plurality of user terminals a user-side network connection completion signal to the host terminal via the first transmission line, sending from the first one of the plurality of user terminals a specified contract signal to the host terminal via the first transmission line, sending from the host terminal to the first one of the plurality of user terminals, via the first transmission line, setting information for enabling

communication between the first one of the plurality of user terminals and the host terminal via the second transmission line. Neither Yoshimura nor the other art of record shows or suggests sending setting information from a host terminal to a user terminal via a first communication line for allowing communication over a second communication line as recited in claim 12. Claim 12 is submitted to be allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

Each issue raised in the Office Action dated August 10, 2007, has been addressed, and it is believed that claims 1-12 are in condition for allowance. Wherefore, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-12 is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the examiner is respectfully requested to contact Scott Wakeman (Reg. No. 37,750) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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